

The expectations of colleges are relative to the length of one's high school experience. Extending high school to five years, as some educators propose doing in order to reduce the pressure experienced by college-bound students, will in fact increase the pressure put on high schoolers, because colleges will expect even more. It is illogical to believe that college expectations will stay the same while high schools are granting their students a sort of extension.

When these expectations rise, it will not be impossible for dropout rates to skyrocket. Some students who do not plan to attend college may find five years of high school too long to wait before joining the work force, and leave school early, along with those who normally would not finish even a four year high school. The extended pressure would also set the stage for talented and intelligent students to "burn out" and lose sight of their goals, resulting in sad ends for high school careers that were promising before the extension year "improvement" was adopted. There may even be parents who disagree strongly and will remove their children from school. All of these factors would affect school attendance rates in a derogatory manner, which in turn hurts funding, which in turn hurts every part of the system – especially the students.

Teaching, too, will suffer under this proposed extension. Already in this state there are teacher shortages in the public school system. In private schools, most teachers are working without a "free period" for six or seven classes. Yes, there are more and more teachers available each year; but they would not be enough to compensate for such an increased demand as a fifth year of high school would require. The caliber of teachers in the classrooms would inevitably decrease as schools scrape the bottom of the barrel in order to fill their quote. Undermining the quality of teaching hardly seems something that will better prepare students for high achievement, no matter how long they spend in the classroom.

I believe that extending high school to five years would not be a wise decision. Colleges will add more requirements to their already lengthy list of demands, high schoolers will be more apt to drop out, and teachers would be difficult to find, especially exemplary ones. Any one of these factors should be enough to deter any high school from attempting this educational suicide, no matter how well-meaning the action would be.